Marx on Mallock

—or—

Facts vs. Fiction

BY DANIEL DE LEON

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MARX ON MALLOCK

....OR....

FACTS vs. FICTION

WORKINGMEN AND WORKINGWOMEN OF NEW YORK:

First a word on the title of this address. A critical acquaintance was much surprised, when he learned from me that Marx had never written a line on Mallock. The title—"Marx on Mallock"—he thought was misleading. It is not. Sound reasoning answers nonsense in advance, and is a commentary on all future nonsense. The Rev. Jasper in the South denied, in this generation, that the sun does not move around the earth. "The sun do move!" declared the sapient Jasper. An address entitled "Copernicus on Jasper" would be to the point, although the Rev. Jasper did not bestow his wisdom upon earth but many a century after the great astronomer Copernicus had for all time settled the question about the earth's motion around the sun. It is so also with Marx and Mallock.

There is another, a probable, misapprehension that I wish to remove before entering upon my subject. I had a more important, a vastly more important object in view, when I accepted the invitation to deliver this address, than to overthrow, refute, or confute Mallock. That vastly more important purpose is to unroll before you one of the most brilliant chapters of Marx's "Capital"—a chapter in which economics and sociology, history and the philosophy of history, are so sublimely blended that to study that chapter is, in itself, a liberal education. In unrolling that chapter before you, Mallock will, happily, serve as a foil. The contrast will

set out Marx all the more radiant. Incidentally, of course, Mallock will be eclipsed, or confuted, in point of fact and in point of reasoning; but that is only incidentally. It cannot, in this generation, be the main purpose of an address on economics.

I hold in my hand a booklet issued by the public lecture bureau of the National Civic Federation. The booklet is entitled "Socialism." It contains Mallock's recent lectures here in America against Socialism. It is the booklet which the advertisements for this meeting recommended you to read in advance—especially its Sixth Lecture, which may be said to sum up the others. I hope you have followed the recommendation. It will greatly assist you in understanding the issue.

The key-note to Mallock's contention is that Marx—and with him the Socialist propagandist—ignores, if he does not deny, the existence and necessity of intelligence in the production of the vast amount of wealth produced in modern society. Not that Mallock claims that Marx ignores, or denies, intelligence, and the necessity of such, on the part of the operative in the operations of his hands. Not that. Mallock's contention is that Marx is blind to a special class of intelligence, an intelligence that, as Mallock expresses it, differs "not in degree, but in kind" from the intelligence that the manual operative exercises, and which intelligence, different in kind, is the actual source of the modern great output in wealth. This particular intelligence Mallock calls "ability," "directive ability"; he locates the same in "The Few," the capitalists; and from these premises he concludes that, seeing "The Few," the capitalist class, are the fertile source of the greatly increased output, that increased output, or "increment," as Mallock calls it, belongs of right to "The Few," the capitalist class, and not to the many, as Marx claims.

This is the substance of Mallock's position. But let us

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place Mallock upon the witness-stand by quoting him literally as he elaborates his theory from step to step, from premises to conclusion, in the course of his lectures.

On page 11 of the booklet, Lecture I, Mallock states the "theory" or "doctrine" of Karl Marx in these words:

all wealth is due to the labor of the average majority—to that ordinary manual exertion which in all cases is so equal in kind that an hour of it on the part of any one man is approximately as efficacious as an hour of it on the part of any other.

In the course of the VIth and last lecture, which summarizes his argument in detail, Mallock returns to the point, and says on page 115:

I pointed out that, as an instrument of popular agitation, socialism was based on the doctrine which Karl Marx managed to invest with a semblance of scientific truth, to the effect that all wealth is produced by ordinary manual labor—

These two passages—I quote only these two, there are many more—expressly claim that the Marxian doctrine is to the effect that "all wealth is produced by ordinary manual labor," in other words, that manual labor is the sole producer of wealth. This is the basis—the necessary and the false basis, as I shall prove to you before I close—for the superstructure of Mallock's theory, which he proceeds to elaborate with the following reasoning.

At the top of page 116 Mallock argues:

The doctrine of Marx, as to the all-productivity of labor is, so I pointed out, virtually quite adequate to explain the production of wealth in very early communities, and even in certain remote and primitive groups to-day; but the amount of wealth per head of the industrial population in such communities is proverbially small in amount, and very meager in kind. It affords a contrast, and not a parallel to, the amount and kind of wealth produced under the modern system. What is produced per head in the latter case is indefinitely higher in quality, and more then ten times greater in quantity, than what is produced in the former: and the question is, therefore, what is the cause of the difference—the small out-put and the great?

As will presently appear, when we shall enjoy the treat of hearing Marx himself, with the exception of the introductory

sentence in the passage that I have just read, and in which, as you will presently see, Marx is wrongly quoted—with the exception of that introductory sentence, the Socialist has no fault to find with the passage. It is in fact, as you will presently perceive, a page from Marxian economics, which Marx states with infinitely more lucidity. But confining ourselves to Mallock, for the present, his argument is:—Vast is the contrast between the amount of wealth produced by primitive, and the amount of wealth produced by modern society. What, asks Mallock, is the reason, or the cause, of the difference?

Before answering the question, Mallock very correctly resorts to the analytic method of elimination, by considering and eliminating possible answers that might suggest themselves, and yet are mistaken. On the same page, 116, he reasons:

> No reference to skill or the exceptional craftsmanship of individuals will provide us with any answer: for were exceptional skill, as we see in the case of an illuminated missal, or a cup by Benvenuto Cellini, whilst it will produce individual commodities of almost priceless value, will produce only a few of them, and the cost of these will be extravagant, whilst the kind of commodities which are typical of modern production is a kind which is distinctly cheap and susceptible of indefinite multiplication. Indeed, in the production of any article of modern wealth, the necessity for rare skill is a draw-back, and makes the supply of the supply at once costly and uncertain.

Again, as will duly transpire, no fault can be found with the reasoning. It is Marxian, up to the handle—primitive or pre-capitalist society yields a meager production of wealth; capitalist society yields an abundance, and is even capable of multiplying the abundance many fold. The individual skill of the operative is not the cause of the increase; indeed, the greater the skill that an article requires for its production the smaller is the output thereof. Individual skill, or the intellect of the individual manual laborer, being rather a drawback to, than a promoter of, plenty, what is the cause of the plentifulness in modern production? The next passage

from the testimony of witness Mallock furnishes his answer. On that same page, 116, the witness avers:

The great factor which differentiates modern production from production of all other kinds has nothing to do with the operation of ordinary or even skilled labor, but consists in the mental faculties by which labor is directed: and to these faculties I give the name of ability—

The answer contained in this passage is still rather vague; but it leads up rapidly to something definite. "Ability," the fact that "ability" is needed does not yet locate the ability. Further down, however, you will find the Mallockian point clinched by a definition and the location of the ability. "Ability," he proceeds to define as

indicating certain powers residing in the minds of THE FEW.

The cat is out. "The Few," of course, are the capitalist class. The remaining passages, on this particular head, I shall go over rapidly. I cite them merely for the sake of presenting Mallock's position in all its fullness.

On page 117 Mallock re-describes the limitations of manual labor—

I further pointed out that between labor and directing ability the difference was one not of degree but of kind, and that labor, whether skilled or unskilled, stood for the mind of a man directing the operations of his own private pair of hands, these operations ending with the handiwork on which the man is engaged, and not affecting the handiwork of any man excepting himself.

He then tersely contrasts manual labor with "ability"—

Ability, I said, on the other hand, stands for the mind of some one man, not affecting any labor of his own hands at all, but influencing simultaneously the labor of any number of other men.

Finally Mallock epitomizes his argument at the bottom of page 117 in these words:

The productivity, in short, of the labor of the many in the modern world depends altogether on the directive faculties of the few. The many do little more than supply a minimum, or a unit, which the ability of the few multiplies.

and on page 118 in this form:

whilst the many, in modern as well as in primitive societies, produce

a minimum of wealth, without which there would be no wealth to increase, the increment, by which modern production is differentiated from primitive, is due to the direction of the few, and not to the labor of the many.

The practical conclusion of Mallock's reasoning is reached on page 123:

if once the functions of the directive ability, of the few are clearly recognized and asserted, and if labor in the modern world is exhibited as practically helpless without it, socialism, as an instrument of popular agitation, would be paralyzed.

In order to put Mallockism to real good use—indeed, the only use it can serve in popular enlightenment—that is, contrast it squarely with Marxism, I think it will be well to sum up Mallock's position, from his own words, before proceeding to take up Marx.

Marx, Mallock claims, sees only in manual labor, which includes the individual skill of the individual worker, the source of all wealth and wealth production: Marx errs: the error will be perceived by comparing and contrasting the output of wealth in primitive socicty with the output of wealth in modern society: in primitive society, where individual skill was a factor and even to-day, in the production of all articles requiring high craftsmanship, the output of wealth is meager: in modern production, wherc, the less the individual skill, all the more abundant is production, thc output of wcalth is great: whence the difference? The differencc proceeds from the circumstance that, in modern society, a special intellectual faculty is set into operation: that faculty is "ability," "directive ability"; it is a faculty that differs, not in degree but in kind, from any mental faculty that the manual workers set in play: indeed, the manual workers lack that faculty: that faculty resides in "The Few," in the capitalist class: it is, thanks to the faculty, whereby the capitalist can and does affect any number of hands simultaneously, that the output of wealth is so large in modern society: without this quickening faculty, labor in the modern world is practically help-

less: consequently, Marx erred when he claimed that the manual workers, and they alone, produced all wealth, and, therefore, that all wealth belonged to them: on the contrary, seeing that the source of the difference between what labor, undirected by capitalist ability, produces, and what labor, directed by capitalist ability, yields, it follows that that difference belongs, scientifically and morally, to "The Few," to the capitalist class—thus sayeth Mallock.

With this picture clear before our minds, we may proceed to take up Marx—and the facts in the case. Nevertheless, before dropping this booklet, there is one more passage from it to which I must refer. Clear though the position of Mallock is, the passage I have in mind will help to make it still clearer, and thereby offer an all-the-clearer target for the Socialist's answer.

Mallock takes up in this VIth Lecture the answer made to him in "The Worker" of this city, by Mr. Morris Hillquit, who, Mallock says, he was told was the "intellectual Ajax" of American Socialists. The starting point, the basis of Mallock's position and reasoning is, we have seen, the allegation that Marx considers nothing but the manual and mental efforts of the individual manual laborer. Mr. Hillquit's refutation is attempted by quoting these words (page 120) of Marx himself:

> By labor power or capacity for labor is to be understood the aggregate of those mental and physical capacities existing in a human being which he exercises whenever he produces a use-value of any description.

The answer falls wide of the mark. The mental faculties, referred to by Mallock as being totally ignored by Marx, are not the individual brain-powers of the operatives. The passage quoted by Mr. Hillquit refers to such brain-power only. Clear does Mallock make his point, first, that such brain-power or skill, wherever needed, is rather a drawback to the plentifulness of production; and, secondly, that the brain-power which he has in mind consists in the "directing ability"

lodged in the capitalist few, whereby the manual labor, together with the necessarily accompanying skill "of any number of other men," can be influenced, and whereby the ability of the capitalist few is multiplied by the thousand hands whom that ability directs, and thereby turns from sterility into fertility. Mr. Hillquit's "triumphant answer" is irrelevant. Deservedly is it sneered at by Mallock. The only criticism to which Mallock is open on this head, when he charges Mr. Hillquit with not understanding Marx, is that Mallock's sneers are a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

We now have a clear target before us, and may proceed to take up Marx.

I have chosen deliberately the edition of Marx's "Capital," which I here hold in my hands. It is the Swan Sonnenschein edition, printed in England, Mallock's home. With this edition of "Capital" I propose to prove to you—

1st.—That it is a figment of Mallock's brain that Marx saw only in the labor of those manually engaged in production, the source of modern wealth;

2nd.—That Marx perceived, and brilliantly described, the difference between the meager productivity of primitive and the plentiful yield of modern labor; and

3rd.—That, with a flash of his genius, Marx pointed out the existence of the central directing authority in the modern world of production.

After proving, as far as these specific points are concerned, that the Marxian theory is misstated by Mallock, and that Mallock states nothing that Marx had not stated before, and elaborated with scientific and superior lucidity, I shall proceed, "Capital" in hand, to parallel and contrast Mallock's conclusions with the conclusions arrived at by Marx—

1st.—The Mallockian theory, defining the source of the "increment" as a quality of "The Few," with the Marxian theory, which defines the source of the "increment" as a quality of social, or collective power;

2nd.—The Mallockian theory, which attributes to the capitalist "The Few" the leading function in production, with the Marxian theory, which attributes solely to the Working Class (manual laborers and the supervisors from their own class) the productive functions of modern society; and

3rd.—The Mallockian theory which, as a consequence of the theory concerning the leading function in production filled by "The Few," raises the modern Capitalist Class to the dignity of social benefactors, with the Marxian theory which lowers the Capitalist Class to the level of plundering despots.

The chapter from which I shall now mainly quote is the XIIIth of Part IV. It is entitled "Co-operation"—the chapter to which I referred at the opening as being a treatise, the study of which is, in itself, a liberal education.

DIRECT YIELD OF MANUAL LABOR.

With this chapter on "Co-operation" before me, I find myself in a positive *embarras de richesse*—an embarrassment of wealth from which to draw. One can hardly turn to a page without encountering several passages directly indicative of the fact that, in the modern world of production—a world of production in which co-operative labor is a distinctive characteristic—the output of wealth is vastly greater than it was in primitive society, where co-operation was unknown, and, consequently, that output is vastly greater than would be the aggregate total of the present individual manual workers. There is another difficulty in the making of a selection of passages that distinctly point out this fact. The magnificent procession of magnificent and pregnant generalizations, deducted from the central fact of the phenomenal fertility of co-operative labor, contained in this chapter, so dove-tail into one another, that it is next to impossible to make any citation that will fall exclusively within any of the

six heads which I have just enumerated. Moreover, seeing that all the observations are grounded upon that central phenomenon of the plentiful yield of co-operative labor, they all contribute their share to the demonstration of the fact that, contrary to Mallock's claim, nothing is remoter from the Marxian theory than the error that the output of modern wealth is the exclusive yield of the manual labor engaged in its production. Everyone who desires to obtain a full grasp of the point should read and study the whole chapter. I shall confine myself under this particular head to quoting just three passages which will be found ample for the purpose.

The first passage will be found on page 311:

> Capitalist production only then really begins, as we have already seen, when each individual capital employs simultaneously a comparatively large number of laborers; when, consequently, the labor-process is carried on on an extensive scale, and yields, relatively, large quantities of products. A greater number of laborers working together, at the same time, in one place (or, if you will, in the same field of labor), in order to produce the same sort of commodity under the mastership of one capitalist, constitutes, both historically and logically, the starting point of capitalist production.

The second passage occurs on page 319:

> The combined working day produces, relatively to an equal sum of isolated working-days, a greater quantity of use-values, and consequently, diminishes the labor time necessary for the production of a given useful effect.

Finally, the third is on page 315, running over to page 316, and clinches the point unmistakably:

> Just as the offensive power of a squadron of cavalry, or the defensive power of a regiment of infantry, is essentially different from the sum of the offensive or defensive powers of the individual cavalry or infantry soldiers taken separately, so the sum total of the mechanical forces, exerted by isolated workmen, differs from the social force that is developed when many hands take part simultaneously in one and the same undivided operation, such as raising a heavy weight, turning a winch, or removing an obstacle. In such cases the effect of the combined labor could either not be produced at all by isolated individual labor, or it could only be produced by a great expenditure of time, or on a very dwarfed scale. Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual, by means

of co-operation, but the creation of a new power, namely, the collective power of masses.

The point is here expressly made. Co-operative labor, "historically and logically, the starting point of capitalist production," yields, "relatively larger quantities of product" than the aggregate total of the individual manual workers would amount to. The second citation reiterates the fact concerning the "greater quantity of use-values" produced by the "combined working day," when compared "to an equal sum of isolated working days," and it explains the fact with the probe that the combined working day "diminishes the labor-time necessary for the production of a given useful article." However important the first two citations are to the issue, Mallock may still claim, however forced the claim, that it does not necessarily follow, from Marx's recognition of a larger output of wealth as the accompanying phenomenon of the simultaneous operation of many workers in one industry, that Marx recognizes the function of an intelligence, outside of the men busy at manual work, and necessary to the conjuring forth of the said increased output. Mallock may still claim, however forced the claim, that the point he raises is still left un-met, to wit, the existenee of a human foree, whieh, without itself operating its hands, is, thanks to its mental aetivity—Mallock's "ability"—essential to the yield of the said increased output. The third quotation, led up to by the two previous ones, clinches the point. The operation of many men together, implies organization; organization implies subdivision of functions; subdivision of functions, together with organization, implies differentiation of activities. Marx's illustration is brilliant. No more than the superior "offensive power of a squadron of cavalry," or the superior "defensive power of a regiment of infantry," can be said to flow exclusively from the troopers who wield sabres, or the infantrymen who carry rifles—no more than in these instances, can it be supposed that the larger output,

which accompanies the simultaneous operations of many workers, flows exclusively from the manual laborers. Marx's brilliant simile, contained in the last citation, to which I shall have occasion again to refer upon a subsequent head, at once removes the bottom from under Mallock's claim that Marx attributes to direct manual labor the only source of all wealth, and also eclipses Mallock's necessarily clumsy presentation of the subject of the larger output of wealth in modern society. Why Mallock's presentation was *necessarily* clumsy will appear presently.

DIRECTING "ABILITY"—"AUTHORITY."

It should not be necessary, after the analysis I have just presented, to prove that Mallock erred when he claims that Marx fails to perceive, not the function merely, but even the existence of a directing power in modern production. The squadron of cavalry, or the regiment of infantry can not choose but be under direction. Neither, of course, could the squadron, or regiment, of co-operating manual workers. But, as I said in opening, the refutation of Mallock is only an incident in this address, the real object of which is to unroll Marx to your view. Accordingly, under this second head, I shall cite the second scientific generalization of Marx's on the subject of co-operation. The passage occurs on page 321:

> All combined labor on a large scale requires, more or less, a directing authority, in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities, and to perform the general functions that have their origin in the action of the combined organism, as distinguished from the action of its separate organs. A single violin player is his own conductor; an orchestra requires a separate one.

How trifling, mean and puny, when contrasted with this passage, does not Mallock's argument appear concerning the existence of the directing power in the world of production! Mallock states a fact, the philosopher and scientist Marx not only pithily stated the identical fact before, but, in stating

it, traced the fact to its cause, and thereby laid the foundation that guards against error in following the fact to its effects—as will presently appear more clearly.

The harmoniously blended melody of many individual instruments is in the nature of the increased output in modern production. To the production of that harmoniously blended melody the orchestra director is indispensable: indispensable likewise, for identical reason, is the director in the orchestra of production, declares Marxian science.

Having proved Mallock's misstatements of Marx, I shall now, agreeable to promise, proceed to contrast by parallelling the divergent conclusions arrived at by each. The first of these conclusions is upon

THE SOURCE OF THE "INCREMENT."

According to Mallock, the source of the "increment"—the excess of output, when the laborers are working in "orchestra," over the output, when each laborer is his own "director"—is an attribute of "The Few." According to Mallock it is a quality that resides in "The Few" only. Male and female creation are both necessary for procreation. Between the male and the female, a sort of co-operation may be said to take place. According to Mallock, the quality, which produces the increased output, partakes of the nature of male or female creation only in as much as that quality resides exclusively in the one or the other of the parties to production; but, according to Mallock, the human vessel that is the depository of the output-increasing quality has nothing in common with the workers' hands which it directs, it has not even that in common with them that the male, or the female, has, the one with the other. In short, according to Mallock "The Few" are, by virtue of their quality, what a male would be that needed not the female for procreation—independent.

Marxian theory on the source of the "increment" is radically different. It may be given in the following two pas-

sages, the first from page 316:

Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual, by means of co-operation, but the creation of a new power, THE COLLECTIVE POWER OF MASSES.

This passage is the closing clause of one that I have cited before; the second passage will be found at the bottom of page 319:

When the laborer co-operates systematically with others, he strips off the fetters of his individualism, and develops the capabilities of his species.

In other words, differently from Mallock, Marx locates the "increment"-producing quality not in "The Few," but in *the many*. He defines that quality as a "social power," a "collective power," that resides in the manual workers and their director, collectively—in the Working Class. Particularly pregnant is the second passage. It enunciates a principle not of economics only but of sociology also;—a principle that incidentally knocks the bottom from under the high-sounding pretensions of the "Individualists" of all shades, from the "rose-water" to the "bomb-throwing" variety;—the principle that "individualism" fetters the individual, while freedom awaits him only when, stripped of those fetters, he develops the capabilities of his species. Man is the slave of Nature, a toy of her caprices, so long as the output of wealth is so meager that it keeps him with his nose to the grindstone of toil. Freedom comes only in the measure that the yield of his labor frees man from want, from the fear of want, and from the necessity of arduous toil to satisfy his physical necessities. So long as he labors individually, he is fettered—the yield of his labor cannot afford him freedom. The condition for freedom—an ample supply of wealth—depends upon co-operative labor. Profound, accordingly, is the philosophy that recognizes that only in co-operation—the status where man merges his individualism with man—does he develop the capabilities of his species—the capabilities for freedom.

I shall leave for later the demonstration of the correctness of the Marxian and the error of the Mallockian theory. Confining myself here to contrasting the two, this may be said upon this head:

The theory of the fertility of co-operation is but an amplification, on the domain of sociology, of a principle that is well known in mechanics. A cable is twisted out of a large number of separate threads that are individually of slight strength; but the strength of the cable is not equal merely to the sum of the strength of all the threads out of which it is made. It is equal to the sum of the strength of all those separate threads, plus an added strength that is born of their being twisted into one rope. According to Mallock, the director, whose quality twists the cable of production out of the multiple manual workers, stands to the twisted cable of modern production in the identical relation that the ropemaker, whose quality twists the rope, stands to the rope itself—the relation of human master to inanimate thing. According to Marx, on the contrary, the directing force that twists the cable of production out of the multiple individual workers, is flesh of their flesh; bone of their bone; differentiated organs of a social power whose joint efforts produce the results that enable man to enjoy the fruits of having stripped himself of the fetters of his individualism, and developed the capabilities of his species—freedom from animal want.

The contrast being established between Marx and Mallock on the source of the "increment," obvious, in advance, is the conclusion that each arrives at on the subject of

THE PRODUCER OF THE INCREMENT.

Mallock, as we have seen, makes the capitalist the sole depository of the quality that yields the "increment." As a consequence, the depository is also the "increment" producer.

As against this theory I shall quote two passages from Marx. The first is an allegation of the economic facts in the case. It is found on page 322:

Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labor so soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, as such, begins, so now, he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workmen, and groups of workmen, to A SPECIAL KIND OF WAGE LABORER. An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers), and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. THE WORK OF SUPERVISION BECOMES THEIR ESTABLISHED AND EXCLUSIVE FUNCTION.

Is the allegation false? is it true? We shall see when we come to the proof. Suffice it here to record Marx's statement that, in the course of capitalist development a "special kind of wage laborer" is generated—the workingman, the ability of whom is the "directing ability" which co-operative labor demands, and is alone exercised. If this allegation is true, then it is the Working Class—some as manual workers, others as directors, but all of the Working Class—whose co-operative labor brings forth the increment. What function would then be left to the capitalist few? Is their title "Captains of Industry" an arrogation? We shall see under the next head. In the meantime and under the present head the following third generalization—a gem of philosophy of history—will illumine the field. It is taken from page 323:

It is not because he is a leader of industry that a man is a capitalist, he is a leader of industry because he is a capitalist. The leadership of industry is an attribute of capital, just as in feudal times the functions of general and judge were attributes of landed property.

On the benches of the schools we are warned and taught not to confound cause with effect. According to Mallock "The Few" start with a certain God-given quality—"ability"—by virtue of which they acquire the substance—"capital." According to Marx, the process is in the inverse order, and he backs up his view with a historic generalization that is luminous: according to him "The Few" start with capital,

and by virtue of that, and as an attribute of that, they figure as "leaders of industry," or "ability" displayers, as Mallock expresses it. How important it is to determine whether "leadership in industry" is the cause of the "ownership of capital," or whether, inversely, the "ownership of capital" is the cause of "leadership in industry," meaning thereby the "ability" of "The Few"—in short, how important it is to be clear upon what is cause and what is effect, a scene that is taking place at this very time in the Tombs Criminal Court of this city illustrates aptly.

Harry Kendall Thaw is on trial for the murder of the architect White. The letters of Thaw's mother, his nurses, his doctors from far and wide, his "cousins, his sisters and his aunts" are all thronging to the witness-stand to prove the man insane. Now it happens that Thaw is a capitalist. Tested by all the tests furnished by Mallock—seeing that Thaw is in possession of his ample share of the "increment," which, according to Mallock, flows only from, is found in the possession of, and justly belongs to "ability" only—Thaw is of the fraternity of "The Few." Now the question comes, Is Thaw a capitalist because he is insane, or is he insane because he is a capitalist? If Mallock is right, the conclusion could not be escaped that Thaw's insanity is the fertile source of the "increment" which he enjoys; if Marx is right the conclusion would be that Thaw's ownership of capital is the cause of his insanity—an affliction that it would seem hard to escape by anyone who leads a capitalist's life, the life of preaching "Christian Brotherhood" and practicing the morality of the jungle; of preaching "family purity" and practicing debauchery; of preaching "industry" and setting the example of idleness; of preaching "common sense," and pursuing that wildest of Utopianisms, which consists in imagining that a social system, which corrodes its own foundations, can be stable and lasting; which preaches "enlightenment" and is intent upon fastening mediaeval ignorance upon the

masses. But I am anticipating. To return to the subject.

There remains one more contrast to establish between Marx and Mallock. It is the contrast between their opposing views concerning

THE FUNCTION OF "THE FEW."

Mallock, we have seen, imputes to "The Few" the function of "directing" labor in the modern world of production. Mallock's position is the legitimate consequence of his premises. "The Few" being the sole depositories of the "ability" requisite to bring forth the "increment," their function in society is to exercise their "ability," to which exercise the "increment" is due, and to which "increment" are due the blessings of affluence. In other words, according to Mallock, the function of "The Few" is the important function of captaining industry. Marx, we have seen, proceeds from the principle that the "increment," as Mallock calls it, so far from being the result of a quality residing in a Few, is a quality residing in the collectivity, a *social* power. And we saw him, after illumining his contention with the illustrations of the squadron of cavalry, and the regiment of infantry, and after further demonstrating, with the illustration of the orchestra director, the inevitableness of a central directing authority—after that, we saw Marx allege the fact that the important function of supervision, direction, etc., is exercised by a "special kind of wage laborer." In short, the function of direction, of captaining industry, according to Marx, is not a function filled by Mallock's "The Few," but a function filled by a differentiated portion of the Working Class itself.

The question, now suggesting itself and demanding an answer, is a question I have dropped before in the course of this address—have, then, "The Few," the capitalists, no function whatever in present society, according to Marx? We have seen him deny with allegations of fact that "The Few" cap-

tain industry, the one function imputed to them by Mallock. Are, then, "The Few" denied by Marx all social function in present society? Far from it; and important it is to understand clearly what that function really is.

Upon this head I shall quote four passages from this chapter. The first three occur successively on page 321; they are as follows:

The work of directing, superintending and adjusting, becomes one of the functions of capital, from the moment that labor, under the control of capital, becomes co-operative.

This sentence answers the first part of the question—the work of superintending, directing, adjusting becomes one of the functions of capital from the moment labor becomes co-operative in the course of social evolution. The answer may seem a contradiction to the passage, quoted before, and which imputes to workingmen, to "a special kind of wage laborer," and not to "The Few," the function of directing, superintending and adjusting. It is no contradiction, as we shall presently see. In fact, as we shall presently see, the seeming contradiction leads to a question, the answer to which is of no little moment to the understanding of the situation. But, not to anticipate—

Marx then proceeds:

Once a function of capital, it [the work of directing, superintending, and adjusting] acquires special characteristics.

What are these special characteristics? Marx immediately proceeds to define them:

The directing motive, the end and aim of capitalist production, is to extract the greatest possible amount of surplus-value, and consequently to exploit labor-power to the greatest possible extent. As the number of the co-operating laborers increases, so too does their resistance to the domination of capital, and with it, the necessity for capital to overcome this resistance by counter-pressure. The control exercised by the capitalist is not only a special function, due to the nature of the social labor-process, and peculiar to that process, but it is, at the same time, a function of the exploitation of a social labor-process, and is consequently rooted in the unavoidable antagonism between the exploiter and the living and laboring raw material he exploits.

We begin to perceive the nature of the special characteristics of the functions of "The Few." Finally, the following passage from page 322, closely following, intimately connected with, and climaxing the three I just read, completes the reasoning and rounds up the answer. Marx says:

> If, then, the control of the capitalist is in substance twofold by reason of the twofold nature of the process of production itself—which, on the one hand, is a social process for producing use-values, on the other, a process for creating surplus-value—in form that control is despotic. As co-operation extends its scale, this despotism takes forms peculiar to itself.

To sum up these four citations—According to Marx, the capitalist steps upon the stage of history equipped with capital. Of course, the thought arises, How did he get it? It is an important thought, so important that I shall not close without meeting it. For the present, and summing up Marx, it is enough to say that, according to Marx, the capitalist turns up historically in possession of capital. He did not acquire its possession "for his health." He acquired it because he realized he needed the same to satisfy the cravings of his previous *petit bourgeois* heart—more wealth. His capital, such as it then was, invested him with the attribute of "Captain of Industry," and he started exercising that function—a new function to him. Once he assumed the function, the function began to acquire special characteristics. The special characteristics which the new function acquired were the result of troubles which the incipient capitalist did not bargain for, but which he could not avoid or evade, and were inherent in the process in which he was a leading actor. More wealth is what he was after, not for the sake of wealth, but for the sake of increasing his capital, whereby to increase his riches. The capitalist was propelled by the motive of extracting "the greatest possible amount of surplus-value" from the employees whom he directed. Surplus-value is what Mallock calls "increment." Marx calls it "unpaid wages"—wealth (use-values) produced by the work-

ers, but appropriated by the capitalist, and turned into surplus-values for himself. Accordingly, acting obedient to the social law that drives him, the capitalist was driven to increasing, and ever increasing, exploitation—the exploitation of whom? Of his workingmen. As the area of the exploitation widened, that is to say, in the measure that more and more workingmen came under his control, the social troubles of the capitalist increased—resistance to his exploitation on the part of his wage-earners. From that instant the one-time single function of the capitalist began to be differentiated into two distinct functions—first, the pristine function of increasing the output of use-values, that is wealth; second, the new function of overcoming the resistance of his employees. From that moment a further process began to take place—more and more did the capitalist withdraw from active "direction, adjusting and supervising"; "a special kind of wage-laborer" simultaneously sprang into existence—workingmen to whom the work of supervision was transferred, and with whom, thenceforth that work became the established and exclusive function. The revolutionary process having freed, or stripped "The Few" of the function of direction, the only function that remained to them was the function of overcoming the resistance of their employees by counter-pressure. That function necessarily was despotic; in the language of Marx, "as co-operation extended its scale, that despotism took forms peculiar to itself." The details and corroboration of these "peculiarities" need not here to be enumerated.

The Marxian theory, accordingly, contrasts sharply with the Mallockian. The latter, by imputing to the capitalist only a beneficent social function, presents him as a benefactor of his kind, and entitled to the wealth that he pockets; the former, by denying to the capitalist all beneficent social function and imputing to him only the functions of despotism, presents him as a harmful social barnacle, who plunders

the Working Class of the wealth they alone produce, and are alone entitled to, and who, in order to effect the plunder must exercise the functions of a despot.

I need spend no time to prove that Mallock erred in his allegations of fact against Marx. Marxian theory does not attribute the great output of modern wealth exclusively to the manual laborer. Marxian theory does not ignore the important function of direction and supervision. These are matters of fact that the passages which I cited settle. What does remain to be proved is the incorrectness of Mallock's and the correctness of Marx's deduction—the incorrectness of the deduction of Mallock that the "increment" is due to the "directive ability" of "The Few," as Mallock calls the Capitalist Class, and that, therefore, to them only that "increment" rightly belongs; and the correctness of the deduction of Marx that the "increment" is due to the co-operative labor of the Working Class; that the Capitalist Class, as Marx calls Mallock's "The Few," is an idle class in production, and, consequently, that the "increment" rightly belongs only to the Working Class. Even this it should be superfluous to prove. The proofs come daily crushing down over the heads of the Mallocks. They have become the daily experiences of the age. Nevertheless, I shall cite one event in proof—a typical one because it is connected with a human tragedy, and the complete Socialist position received high judicial vindication. The further reason I have for choosing this particular event is that the prominent magistrate, who figured in the affair, was a pronounced Socialist-hater; a typical upholder of the Capitalist Class; a denouncer of Socialism as a "threat to the sanctity of womanhood and the family," while, himself, he cast off a worthy wife, went to New Jersey and married another woman; a front-pew-holding assailer of "Socialist un-Godliness";—in short, a most "unwilling witness" by all the canons of the laws of evidence. He was Judge Van Brunt, a Justice of the Supreme Court of

this State. The event was the following:

It was sixteen or seventeen years ago. One of those accidents for which the New York Central Tunnel has become notorious happened there. In that "Black Hole of Calcutta" a collision took place causing the death of nearly a score of human beings. When the Coroner came to the spot the discovery was made that the deaths did not occur through the smash-up, as was supposed. It was discovered that the passengers died by being burned to death, or smothered to death in the smoke. In the collision, the stoves, used for heating the cars, were upturned; that set the cars on fire; and the people who could not escape were consumed by the flames, or asphyxiated in the smoke. By the laws of this State it is a penal offence to heat cars, on lines of more than twenty miles, I think, with stoves. The statute is intended to avoid just such an accident as happened in the Tunnel. Seeing that the New York, New Haven and Hartford road, which was the road on the cars of which the catastrophe occurred, is vastly longer than twenty miles, or so, the road was guilty of a violation of the statute; in view, moreover, of the homicidal consequences of the violation, the Directors of the road were indicted for manslaughter. Many, if not most, of the Directors of the New York Central road being also directors of the New York, New Haven and Hartford concern, the whole batch, Chauncey M. Depew among the lot, were arraigned at the bar of justice. There they stood, beautiful to contemplate—these gentlemen of "directing ability." They pleaded not guilty—on what ground? On the ground that they did *not know that their cars were heated with stoves.* This should be proof enough. But the proof in this instance does not merely "fill the dry measure." It runs over. At this point Judge Van Brunt steps upon the scene. The pleadings, backward and forward, in the case were long-drawn. The capitalistic lawyers of the precious "The Few" do not object to milking a sister capitalist cow, with the law's delays, when

they get hold of her teats. I shall not, I do not need to give the full details of the extensive proceedings. The curious may hunt them up for themselves. I shall here give the gist of the affair. The Directors having pleaded not guilty on the ground that they did not know that their cars were heated with stoves, Judge Van Brunt in due time quashed the indictment, upon their own motion, laying down the correct principle that manslaughter, like any other crime, can attach only where knowledge is proven of a violation of the law. Seeing the Directors had no knowledge thereof, they were guiltless, spotless as pascal lambs, whereas the guilty parties were those who knew of the violation of the law—in other words, the guilty parties were—who? The conductors, the breakmen, the engineers, the firemen, the stationmaster, etc., etc. They were the guilty ones, because *it was they who ran the trains.* This is a crushing proof at once of the falsity of Mallock's nursery tale about the directing functions exercised by "The Few" in the modern world of labor, and of the correctness of the Marxian principle. We have all been recently made familiar with the term "Dummy Directors" that sprang up during the investigations of the insurance frauds. But why multiply examples, the very capitalist papers that are being printed to-night, while I am speaking, will furnish you to-morrow morning with fresh proofs.* Everybody knows; he sees the evidence of it on all sides—from top to bottom all the industries of the land are operated by the Working Class. The superfluousness of Mallock's "The Few" is brought home to all who care to think every time a member of "The Few" is gathered unto the bosom of Abraham. Numerous though the

* Since the delivery of this address a curious corroborative proof of the principle above stated fell into the lecturer's hands. It is a neatly printed 22-page pamphlet entitled: "Recommendations of the Superintendent of Banks, New York State. In his Official Report, Transmitted to the Legislature, January 1, 1908." On the 4th page of this report, after referring to the recent panic-producing failures, the lists of "corporate abuse principally contributing" thereto is recited. On the list stands this entry: "Inattention to, and disregard of, duties of directors." The pamphlet bristles with evidences of the "directing ability" of "The Few."

industries be and are which their "ability" "directs," their death in nowise seems to affect the run of things. Indeed, the whole Capitalist Class might die to-night, and not a wheel would stop revolving to-morrow; not an industry would be paralyzed. The only difference—a great difference, indeed—a difference that clinches the point—would be that the Working Class of the land, finding themselves, not merely in control (they are that now) but in possession also (the Capitalist Class owners having vanished), production would be forthwith freed from the capitalist dead-man's hand that now weighs upon it; wealth, being no longer produced for the capitalist purpose of sale, where prices are ruled by the supply, but being thenceforth produced for use—the use of the producers—its output would leap upwards with such bounds and leaps that the social blot of involuntary poverty would be wiped out—with all that that implies.

It happens, with this matter of capitalist "directing," what happens with taxation. The apostles of capitalism blow hot and cold, according as their interests dictate. One day, when workingmen bestir themselves to set up their own political party and run the Government, the spokesmen of "The Few" step forward with the denunciatory objection: "How dare you presume to run the Government! You do not pay the taxes! It is we, the taxpayers, who alone have the right to govern." The next day, when these same capitalists object to a tax, and seek its repeal, they appear before the self same workingmen in the garb of saving angels and address to them this language: "Dear workingmen, you are bent down with taxes! We come to your help! Fall in line behind us! We will relieve your burden!" Exactly so in the matter of "directing." One day the Mallocks soberly declare, amid the plaudits of the "The Few," that they are the directors of production and well-spring of wealth; the next day, when arraigned under an indictment in Court for having misdirected, the hour of danger wrings from their breasts

the truth, that they do not direct, and their own magistrates place the official seal of approbation upon the plea, echoing: "Not they are guilty, because not they direct; the guilty are the actual directors—the workingmen who run the concern!"

There now remain only two knots to tie. I am now ready to tie them. I hope you are also ready. I hope so because I hope you have followed me closely enough to now have two questions uppermost on your minds the consideration of which will be necessary to round up the subject.

The first of the two questions that I expect you to have in mind is this:

"No doubt Mallock misstates Marx: no doubt Marx recognizes the need and the existence of a directing intelligence, outside of the intelligence directly exercised by the manual worker in modern production. No doubt also Marx's position is sound, Mallock's whimsical, as to the source of the 'increment,' the function of Working Class elements in direction, and the idleness of 'The Few,' as far as production is concerned. We recognize, we grant all that. Nevertheless, does not the obvious fact remain that without the consent of 'The Few' the workers can do nothing? Does not Mallock sufficiently hint at the fact in one of the passages quoted from his VIth Lecture where he speaks of the 'practical helplessness' of the Working Class without the Capitalist Class? Is not this helplessness a fact? And would it not follow from this fact that the Marxian principle—'Labor is the producer of all wealth, to the laborer all wealth belongs'—must be necessarily modified to read: 'Although Labor is the producer of all wealth, nevertheless, seeing the laborer is helpless without the consent of the capitalist, the capitalist is entitled to a share of the product?'"

No; it does not follow.

It is not Labor alone that is "helpless," Government also is "helpless." Without the consent of the capitalist no war can to-day be declared—he would refuse the cash therefor;

and at his bidding peace is signed. The capitalist's power, without which the worker is "helpless," though a power grounded in fact, is not, as Mallock and the capitalists generally would imply, a power grounded in nature. It is a man-made power, that man can and will un-make. If a gang of bandits appropriates the well in an oasis of the desert, the travelers, of course, would be "helpless," and would be compelled to accept the bandits' terms for every cup of water. It would, however, never occur to the bandits to claim that their power in the premises is a natural affair. They never would ground their claim upon the submission of the travelers to their terms on the principle that the water in the well, and necessary to keep it full, oozed and oozes out of their pores. Mallock, however, implies for his "The Few" this very thing. He virtually claims that the "increment" oozes out of the capitalist's pores, and he imparts a semblance of truth to the droll claim by the obvious fact that capitalist consent is to-day necessary for the nation to breathe. Whereupon he raises this fact to the dignity of a principle. The error in the Mallockian principle lies in the imperfection of its sentence. The principle is not: "The capitalist is necessary"; the fact, not the principle, is: "The capitalist is necessary *to-day,*" that is, under the conditions which the brigands, who appropriated a well in the desert may be supposed to have created. The trick in the Mallockian position is an old trick —it is the trick behind which the "divine power of royalty" once entrenched itself, and is still entrenched in the minds of the fatuous—the trick of pretending that "what is, is natural and must continue to be." The answer to the second question which I trust you have in mind will settle this point more completely.

You will, I hope, wish to know how did the capitalist come by the capital which, according to Marx, he starts in possession of. Upon this subject all histories are eloquent—whether they be sober ones, like Bacon's history of Henry

VII, or Mark Twain's story of "The Prince and the Pauper." The capital that the capitalist starts with, at the logical and historical starting point of capitalist production, is the product of unqualified and undisguised *rapine*. Nor is it, nor could it be different in America. First, profiting by the rapine committed by the European usurpers in expropriating the peasantry, the American bourgeois was furnished, through immigration, with an ideal proletariat for human raw material for exploitation; and, next, he "helped himself." Fraudulent failures, fraudulent fires, misappropriation of trust funds, and such other "ability"-denoting manoeuvres without exception supplemented the "original accumulation" with which the American capitalist historically stepped upon the stage, and an important part of which was the human raw material which he imported from abroad. Summing up the review of the process, Marx pithily says on page 785:

"If money, according to Augier, 'comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek,' capital comes dripping from head to foot from every pore, with blood and dirt"; and no capitalist has since appeared with the requisite starter, or "original accumulation," free from the smut.

Accordingly, neither as a principle in philosophy, nor as a principle in morals is the capitalist entitled to aught. His power is the result of usurpation. He is "necessary" and the workers "helpless" only as long as the travelers in the desert would tolerate the power and "necessity" of the bandits who appropriated the well.

I am done. But before closing I ask to be indulged in paraphrasing Marx.

There was in Marx's time another Oxford professor—Mallock also is an Oxford professor—Nassau W. Senior, who invented as beautiful a nursery tale as Mallock in defense of the capitalists. Of this Senior, Marx says on page 207:

"One fine morning, in the year 1836, Nassau W. Senior, who may be called the bel-esprit of English economists, well

known, alike for his economic 'science,' and for his beautiful style, was summoned from Oxford to Manchester, to learn, in the latter place, the political economy that he taught in the former." The invention of Senior was a masterpiece of economic acrobatics; it was akin to Mallock's acrobatics concerning the fruitfulness of "The Few" and their consequent right to the "increment." Senior's performance Senior called the "Last Hour"—a prodigy by which Senior strove to show that if the hours of labor were shortened hunger and want would stalk through the land. Marx took hold of the gentleman's theory, and tore it to tatters, and then flung the pieces back in his face with a beautiful imaginary apostrophe that summed up the situation. I shall make bold to imitate Marx by closing this address with an apostrophe to Mallock, this latter-day Oxford professor who was summoned by the Civic Federation of capitalists to learn in New York the political economy that he is to teach in Oxford—

Kind Sir, by clothing your theory in the garb of science you have deprived it of the only chance it had to float. You should have clad it in the garb of the miraculous. Paul Lafargue neatly ridiculed it in advance with two pretty epigrams. Your labored effort to prove "The Few" the source of all "increment," he neatly epitomized with the sentence: "The idleness of the capitalist is the source of all wealth." Your labored effort to prove that to "The Few" the "increment" belongs, he triturated with the terse sentence: "Wealth is the product of Labor and the reward of Idleness."

Kind Sir, you dislocate society and you supplement the surgical operation with a miracle. Society is no dislocated entity. The elements requisite for modern production—manual and directing ability—are closely joined and jointed. They are not independent of, they are dependent upon each other, like the various organs of one body; and that body social is the *Working Class*.

Kind Sir, when you say that the increment of wealth which

results from the modern method of production comes from "The Few," you utter a sentiment that is at war with a lofty human sentiment that has animated all noble breasts since remotest antiquity and which it has been reserved to the Socialist Movement to bring down from the mists of unpracticability, and to furnish it with a solid basis upon which to plant itself. The great moral sentiment of the Brotherhood of Man becomes a fertile sentiment for practical conduct only when the material conditions have developed to the point of exposing the swagger of Individualism; to the point of revealing the fact that Individualism is a fetter to human brotherhood and to individuality alike; finally to the point of disclosing the means for the realization of the aspiration of human brotherhood. Individuality can not be developed in penury. The power to dispel penury is a latent power in *mankind.* Your intellect is still at the barbarian's stage that dislocates the capabilities of the species by imputing them to a caste. That the caste of "The Few" is purely imaginary may be all the more creditable to your imagination, but all the more discreditable to your grasp of social science.

Kind Sir, vast as our astonishment is at your discovery of the useful activity of your "The Few," their own astonishment at the discovery, through you, must have been vaster still.

Kind Sir, we do not deny that "The Few" are active. Nobody denies that. Their activity is intense. It is, however, not an activity that *produces,* it is the pickpocket's activity which *transfers* wealth from those to whom it belongs to those to whom it does not belong. It is a conspicuous activity as conspicuous as the Czar's activity—and as deadly.

Kind Sir, your attitude illustrates two Marxian principles —the imperviousness of a usurping class to sense, and the fatality that pursues a class whose historic mission is ended, and yet would hold the stage. If the usurping class of "The Few" were not impervious to sense you, who surely do not

mean to falsify facts, would never have incurred the blunder of palpably misstating Marx; if the mission of "The Few" were not over and they could realize the fact, such a distinguished spokesman of their caste as yourself would not be seen indulging in the contortions necessary to avoid the term *co-operation,* and thereby seek to escape its consequences.

Finally, kind Sir, your argument is welcome to the Socialist—highly welcome. If such a travesty of Fact and Reason as you present against Socialism is the strongest attack possible—then we Socialists feel re-strengthened in our position that Labor is the sole producer of all wealth, and, therefore, all wealth belongs to Labor.

In the language that Marx closes his apostrophe with in the instance of Senior, I say:

"And now, good sir, farewell, and may we meet again in yonder better world—but not before."

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